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BRIEF ARTICLES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE MODERN LANGUAGE SITUATION IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS OF CALIFORNIA

Teachers of Spanish in this State think they are dealing with exceptional conditions. Perhaps there are proportionately more teachers of Spanish here than in any other region, unless we except New York City. I was asked some time ago to make a study of the situation and report to *HISPANIA*.

The first result of my investigation is that full reports have not been kept and the facts are not available, at least, not readily at hand. It would take a great deal of digging up of old records, a task for only the most devoted and enthusiastic of teachers, more than can be expected of our much over-worked staff. Such facts as I have collected will serve as a beginning. But a start should be made at once and an appeal go out to all department heads urging the filing and tabulating of records of all language classes, as five years from now such information will be exceedingly valuable. Instead of being able to compare records for 1911 with those of 1916 and 1921, I am barely able to throw a little light on the situation, March first, 1921, with but a few reliable conclusions.

California is a big State, having large areas of mountain country where the high schools are few and small, having other large farm districts with prosperous communities and a live interest in education, with still other large centers of industry and commerce where there is dense population with big school systems and a highly developed educational program. Many of the little schools nestle close to the big cities so that it is difficult to show the exact situation by a series of totals when taken geographically.

I have been pleased to divide the State as shown in the chart below into seven regions, going from north to south. In the first district, half of the schools have an enrollment of less than 100 pupils, and only one has over 500. In the Sacramento Valley, there are seventeen small schools of less than 100 and none with over 500, except the Capital, which has 2000. In the bay cities and coast towns we have twenty-eight small schools and twenty-two of under 500. But in this district are the big schools of San Francisco, Alameda, Oakland, and Berkeley, in which are eleven schools with a total enrollment of 15,483. In the San Joaquin Valley there are fewer small schools (fifteen) but only three large schools—Stockton, Fresno, and Bakersfield. The next district comprises Los Angeles County and two others west of it. While showing a smaller number of schools (forty-eight) of which only six are of less than 100, the total enrollment is the largest of all the districts as it contains not only the Los Angeles system but also the splendid schools of Pasadena, the beach cities, and those of the Citrus Belt. The last group comprises the eastern and southern counties of the State with nine schools of over 500 and San Diego with over 2400.

District	No. of H. S.	Pupils in attend'ce	No. in faculty	Latin teachers	French teachers	Spanish teachers
North of Sacramento-----	38	4,981	315	24	15	23
Sacramento Valley -----	31	6,042	354	13	14	34
Bay Cities and Coast Towns-----	59	24,427	1,339	44	63	81
San Joaquin Valley -----	54	13,047	794	26	13	58
Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles Counties -----	48	30,851	1,546	51	49	80
Southern Counties -----	39	12,367	739	26	17	58
Totals-----	269	91,715	5,087	184	171	334

Evening and Junior high schools are omitted from the above estimate though the work of the language teachers in these schools is of no mean importance. There are also about thirty other small schools not included for which statistics were not to be had. Only one or two of these have classes in either French, Spanish or Latin.

The first outstanding fact is the large number of schools in which there are classes in either French or Spanish or in both. Of the 300 high schools in the State, over 265 have such classes and of these 225 have classes in Latin. The next important fact to be noted is that a very small proportion of these 700 teachers are devoting their time exclusively to foreign language instruction. Of the total of 500 modern language teachers, sixty-one are teaching Latin as well, and the combination of the three languages seems to be a favorite program, and we might add, an ideal one, other things being equal. Thirty-two of the Spanish teachers are also teaching French. Eighty per cent of the rest are teaching something else. Now we cannot expect the same high standard of efficiency in language instruction where the teacher has also to prepare daily assignments in history, English, algebra or science. But we are confronting not a theory but a condition.

Again we note from the reports that in nearly all the schools where German was taught prior to 1916, Spanish was promptly substituted and the number of classes in Spanish has steadily increased. In the northern part of the State where French has been taught for a number of years, Spanish was not introduced at once, but now in only seven schools has French remained the only language taught. This may be due to the difficulty of securing teachers and to less insistence in demanding that study. In the questionnaire appeared this question: "Have pupils been debarred from advanced work in French or Spanish because of too small classes or from lack of competent teachers?" Among a hundred or so replies, more than a half say "no," and the rest say the smallness of the classes is more of a hindrance than the lack of teachers.

Going on to a comparison of the enrollment given in the three languages, we find difficulties. The number of schools replying to the questionnaire was so limited that I cannot give any exact totals, but I have replies from many schools making possible the comparison of different types and from these I

have made some careful deductions. I have always underestimated so the conclusions are conservative.

First as to the advanced classes. Very few schools have third and fourth-year pupils. Indeed, advanced classes in French and Spanish are found mostly in schools of over 400 pupils, and in some of the very best schools of the State there are no fourth-year classes in any language. This is a matter of vital concern, and some action should be taken looking toward a change in the ruling of Boards compelling classes of less than fifteen pupils to be discontinued.

Next we notice that as a rule more pupils taking French ask for fourth-year instruction than of those taking Spanish. This is perhaps due to the notion that French is truly cultural and that Spanish is only of commercial value. The big tidal wave of pupils into the French classes in 1918 has begun to ebb, but not so much as I supposed. In most of the larger cities the enrollment in French is steadily holding its own. Enrollment in Spanish has nearly doubled since 1919 in most of the schools, but as has been noted, the number taking third and fourth-year shows almost no increase. The following table of totals for 1921 for the Los Angeles system, which is fairly complete owing to the wonderful work of our City Supervisor of Modern Languages, gives us a fair example of the relative position of the two languages. The total number of teachers in the fifteen high schools of the city is 739, and the total enrollment of pupils is 16,705.

Language	Teachers	1st yr.	2nd yr.	3rd yr.	4th yr.	Total
French -----	23	868	742	287	52	1,949
Spanish -----	36	2,162	1,142	276	79	3,659

Undoubtedly the change in admission requirements to the universities, permitting the substitution of two years of modern language instead of four years of Latin, has had much to do with the tremendous slump in the advanced work in Latin in the high schools. It is also a reason why fewer pupils are taking advanced work in modern languages. It would help much to remedy this matter if our colleges would give a special course to our students entering with three years' credit in either French or Spanish, so that their third year would count as an extra credit for them.

The big conclusion in my own mind as a result of this statistical study is that we must start a strong propaganda to convince our principals and other members of our faculties of the real cultural value of both Spanish and French, and in answer to the question as to which is preferable always say, "at least two years of each, but better three years of either one in high school and at least two years of the other in college."

C. SCOTT WILLIAMS

HOLLYWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL DE MÉXICO**CURSO DE VACACIONES PARA EXTRANJEROS—PRIMER AÑO**

A very attractive pamphlet, published by the National University of Mexico, and bearing the above title, was sent last spring as an invitation to different educational centers of the United States. Unfortunately, it was mailed to the recipients rather late in the spring so that many of them, having already made plans for the summer, were unable to give it due consideration.

Nevertheless there were some sixty American teachers of Spanish who availed themselves of this opportunity to improve their knowledge of things Spanish without having to travel to the distant shores of Spain.

All of them, it may be safely stated, must have felt fully recompensed for whatever effort it may have cost them to undertake the journey, as the University of Mexico left nothing undone to make their stay instructive and profitable.

The program of the courses, copied herewith very briefly, was very effectively handled, especially if one considers that it was the first undertaking of its kind attempted by the University of Mexico.

(a) Lecciones :

Lengua española.

Historia de la Literatura española e hispanoamericana.

Arte.

Historia social y política de México.

Geografía de México.

Historia política contemporánea.

Arqueología.

(b) Clases Prácticas :

Conversación (Diaria).

Lectura e interpretación de textos, redacción y composición.

(c) Excursiones :

Viajes a poblaciones de interés histórico y artístico.

Vistas a edificios y museos de la ciudad.

The faculty consisted of very capable professors whose good will and enthusiasm endeared them to everybody.

Frequent visits to the National Museum, under the personal guidance of one of its directors, supervised visits to such places as the Pedregal, Tezopótlan, the Pyramids of San Juan Teotihuacán, etc., revealed to the participants glimpses of Mexican civilization—antedating and postdating Columbus' times—that were ever so suggestive and admirable.

The banquet offered by President Obregón at the Castle of Chapultepec to the members of the course will, no doubt, remain one of the most pleasant recollections to all who attended. The President, though ill in health, impressed everybody as a strong and earnest man. His democratic ways soon made everybody feel at ease, especially so when he tried his luck in the bowling alley—and failed!

On that occasion the President of the National University, Sr. José Vasconcelos (recently made Minister of Education), gave a short address in

the name of President Obregón, in which he emphasized the desire of the latter to have as many teachers and students as possible from the United States getting acquainted directly with Mexico. He believes this to be the best means of creating a better understanding between the two countries, anxious as he seems to be (most of the Mexicans are) to establish amicable relations.

As a very forceful proof of his desire may be mentioned the fact that all those who attended the summer courses were not only exempt from paying consular fees but received free passage from and to the border on the National Railways.

Similar privileges, it appears, will be granted next summer. An effort will also be made to improve the University program in the light of the experience gained this summer.

The courtesy of the Mexican people in general is very remarkable, and it is especially noticeable among the poorer classes, of which—alas!—there are too many. As far as the writer was able to ascertain, none of the participants had ever any cause for complaint as regards lack of courtesy.

Several schools in Mexico City vied with one another to invite the members of the "Curso de Verano para Extranjeros" in order to show their progress, and indeed they had no reason to shun inspection. To mention but one, the "Escuela de la Corregidora," where some 2,000 girls, ranging from ten to twenty years and over, receive instruction in whatever pursuits they intend to follow; educational and entertaining moving-pictures and physical training forming part of the general program. Under the direction of a woman, assisted by capable teachers of both sexes, this school deserves every praise and encouragement. If only there were more of its kind to be found in Mexico, as the lack of public schools seems to be one of the sorest spots in Mexican public life, the capital not excluded! As strong efforts are being made to centralize the supervision of schools and of instruction problems, and since active propaganda has been now undertaken by the President of the National University, now Minister of Education, there are hopeful signs in this respect. As a proof of the Mexican teachers' enthusiasm and collaboration may be mentioned the fact that they are taxing themselves to a certain percentage of their salary in order to alleviate the lot of some of the poorer school children.

Living expenses in Mexico City are not any higher than in the average cities of the United States, provided one does not pay the first price asked for any commodity. Just as in Europe so in Mexico the American is supposed to "swim in money," and he is therefore often expected to pay accordingly. To "bargain" is quite the proper thing in Mexico; indeed it appears that to pay outright the sum asked would rather cause dismay than pleasure!

There are few first-class hotels, and those that bear that attribute charge "first-class" prices. The splendid Y. M. C. A. building, having a waiting list of several hundreds, cannot be considered for rooms; on the other hand it has shown itself very hospitable as regards its social halls. So did the American Club, and the courtesy of both was highly appreciated by everyone. It is rather difficult to get board and room in private families, which, of course, would be preferable to hotels and boarding houses. The University of Mexico

plans to have for the coming summer a community house where the visiting students may find accommodations at reasonable prices as well as a social and informative center. Room and board (in most cases without bath) averaged about \$75 per month.

The climate of Mexico City is quite agreeable even in summer. The average temperature is about 65 to 70 degrees, the nights being very cool. There is generally a daily rainfall from June to September, lasting usually not more than one to two hours. Palm Beach suits may be worn during part of the day, but it is more advisable to take along somewhat heavier clothing and a light overcoat, and especially a raincoat.

It seems that one or two professors of the University of Mexico will be touring the States late this fall in order to acquaint the Americans with the coming summer school program. May they find a warm response to their worthy efforts; so much more so considering the great hospitality and untiring attentions which were shown to the first group of Americans attending this year's summer session. Theirs was a pleasant and fruitful experience!

E. J. OBERLÉ

THE RICE INSTITUTE
HOUSTON, TEXAS

THE DOCTORATE IN SPAIN

Real Decreto autorizando a los graduados extranjeros para cursar el Doctorado en España. Exposición. Señor:

Varios Farmacéuticos argentinos que han seguido sus estudios en Centros docentes extranjeros, se han dirigido a este Ministerio en solicitud de autorización para matricularse en nuestra Universidad, con objeto de cursar en ella el Doctorado de la Facultad respectiva y obtener, en su día, el título correspondiente, manifestando al propio tiempo que no aspiran a que éste les dé derecho a ejercer su profesión en España, sino sólo a alcanzar el reconocimiento oficial de suficiencia que tal título representa.

La ley de Instrucción Pública de 9 de septiembre de 1857 no prevé el caso, pues en su título 6º, y al tratar "De los estudios hechos en país extranjero," determina las condiciones mediante las cuales serán admitidos a incorporación en nuestros Establecimientos docentes los años académicos cursados en otros países (artículo 94); regula la forma en que han de concederse las necesarias autorizaciones, exigiendo el pago de los derechos de matrícula que habrían satisfecho si hubiesen estudiado en España (artículo 95), y permite que se concedan habilitaciones temporales para el ejercicio de las respectivas profesiones a los graduados extranjeros que lo solicitaren, sujetándose a las condiciones que se especifican (artículo 96).

Algo se ha legislado, sin embargo, en el sentido que informa la petición ahora dirigida a este Departamento, en el Real decreto de 20 de septiembre de 1913, que reconoce validez en nuestra Patria a los títulos que en otros países den aptitud para el ingreso en las distintas Facultades correspondientes a la enseñanza superior, siempre que procedan de Establecimiento oficial dependiente del Estado, se demuestre la autenticidad de aquéllos por su legalización o la

acordada oportuna y se identifique la persona a favor de quien estuviesen expedidos.

En la exposición de ese Real decreto se manifiesta que los estudiantes de naciones de América y Oceanía que hablan nuestro idioma se ven obligados a cursar sus carreras en otros países, ya que España no había admitido hasta entonces la validez de los estudios preparatorios para el ingreso en Facultad, y se derivaba por ello hacia otras tierras la corriente que podía y debía afluir a nuestros centros de cultura.

El Ministro que suscribe entiende que al seguir el derrotero iniciado por el Real decreto de 20 de septiembre de 1913 se realiza una obra meritoria y de patriotismo, y como por otra parte los solicitantes de que antes se habla no persiguen el fin utilitario de ejercer en España sus profesiones, sino tan sólo el que, practicados los estudios necesarios se les otorgue el título académico de más elevada categoría, sancionando así su suficiencia profesional, tiene el honor de someter a la aprobación de V. M., de acuerdo con el dictamen del Consejo de Instrucción Pública, el adjunto proyecto de Decreto. Madrid, 4 de mayo de 1917. —SEÑOR: A. L. R. P. de V. M., José Francos Rodríguez.

REAL DECRETO. —Conformándome con las razones expuestas por el Ministro de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, de acuerdo con Mi Consejo de Ministros y con lo informado por el Consejo del Ramo,

Vengo en decretar lo siguiente:

Artículo 1º. Los graduados extranjeros en establecimientos docentes oficiales no españoles dependientes del Estado, que deseen cursar en España las asignaturas que componen los Doctorados de las Facultades respectivas, y obtener en su día los títulos correspondientes, podrán solicitar las matrículas oportunas, presentando en la Universidad Central los títulos acreditativos de que poseen el grado de Licenciado en la Facultad respectiva o su equivalente en el país donde estudiaron, demostrando ante ella la autenticidad de dichos títulos e identificando las personas a favor de quienes estuviesen extendidos.

Art. 2º. Una vez comprobados estos extremos, se concederá la autorización oportuna por la Universidad Central para que los solicitantes puedan matricularse en las asignaturas de los Doctorados respectivos, mediante pago de los derechos establecidos.

Art. 3º. Cursadas dichas asignaturas y obtenida la aprobación de ellas, tendrán derecho a que por el Ministerio de Instrucción Pública se les expida, previos los pagos correspondientes, títulos de Doctor, en los cuales se hará constar que no autorizan para el ejercicio de la profesión en las provincias y Colonias del Reino.

Dado en Palacio a cuatro de mayo de mil novecientos diecisiete. —Alfonso. —El Ministro de Instrucción pública y Bellas Artes, José Francos Rodríguez. (*Gaceta de Madrid* del 5 de mayo de 1917.)